

PRESIDENT TAFT'S CAMPAIGN LETTER

States Reasons Why Voters Should Support the Republican Ticket.

The letter of President Taft to Representative William B. McKinley, chairman of the Republican Congressional committee, in full, is as follows:

Beverly, Mass., August 20, 1910.

My Dear Mr. McKinley:

As the chairman of the National Congressional Republican Committee, you have asked me to give the reasons which should lead voters in the coming November election to cast their ballots for Republican candidates for Congress.

I assume that when this letter is given publicly the lines will be drawn, the party candidates will have been selected, and the question for decision will be whether we shall have in the House of Representatives a Republican or a Democratic majority. The question then, will be not what complexion of Republicanism one prefers, but whether it is better for the country to have the Republican party control the legislature for the next two years and further redeem its promises, or to enable a Democratic majority in the House either to interpose a veto to Republican measures, or to formulate and pass bills to carry out Democratic principles. Prominence has been given during the campaign canvasses just ended to the differences between Republicans; but in the election such differences should be forgotten. Differences within the party were manifested in the two sessions of the present Congress, and yet never in its history has the Republican party passed and become responsible for as much useful and progressive legislation. So, while issues will doubtless arise between members of a Republican majority as to the details of further legislation, the party, as a whole, will show itself in the future, as in the past, practical and patriotic in subordinating individual opinions in order to secure real progress. Hence it is important that after Republican Congressional candidates have been duly and fairly chosen, all Republicans who believe in the party principles as declared in its national platform of 1896 should give the candidates loyal and effective support. If this is done, there will be no doubt of a return of a Republican majority.

DEMOCRATIC REPUTATION.

The only other alternative is a Democratic majority. It is difficult, very difficult, to state all the principles that would govern such a majority in its legislative course; and this because its party platforms have presented a variety of planks not altogether consistent, and because in the present Congress, leading Democrats in the Senate and the House have not hesitated to repudiate certain of their party pledges and to deny their binding character. We may reasonably assume, however, that a Democratic majority in the House would reject the Republican doctrine of protection as announced in 1896.

What, therefore, has a Republican who believes in protection, but objects to some rates or schedules in the present tariff act, to hope from a Democratic majority which, if allowed to pass, would attack the protective system and halve business by a threatened revision of the whole tariff on revenue basis, or if prevented by the Senate or the Executive would merely do nothing?

Such a legislative programme as that set forth in the Republican national platform of 1908 could not be carried out in full by one Congress. Certainly if all its promises are executed in one administration, it will be within a proper time. The present Congress has not only fulfilled many party pledges, but it has by its course set higher the standard of party responsibility for such pledges than ever before in the history of American parties. Hereafter those who would catch voters by declarations in favor of alluring remedial legislation will not make them except with much more care as to the possibility of its enactment. In view of the history of the present Congress, the return of a Republican majority in the next Congress may well inspire confidence that the pledges still unredeemed will be met and satisfied.

THE TARIFF.

Let us consider, summarily, the promise made and the legislation enacted by the present Congress. First and of primary importance was the promise to revise the tariff in accordance with the rule laid down in the platform, to wit: that the tariff on articles imported should be equal to the difference between their cost of production abroad and that cost in this country, including a reasonable profit for the domestic manufacturer. A very full investigation—full, at least, as such investigations have been conducted in the past—was made by the Ways and Means Committee of the House to determine what rates should be changed to conform to this rule. A reduction was made in 654 numbers, and an increase in 220, while 1,150 remained unchanged. The bill was amended in the Senate, but the proportion of increases to decreases was maintained. When I signed the bill I accompanied my approval with the following memorandum:

I have signed the Payne tariff bill because I believe it to be the result of a sincere effort on the part of the Republican party to make a downward revision, and to comply with the promise of the platform as they have been generally understood, and as I interpreted them in the campaign before election.

The bill is not a perfect tariff bill or a complete compliance with the promise made strictly interpreted, but a full-fledged free-trade bill in respect to a subject matter involving many schedules and thousands of articles could not be expected. It suffices to say that except with regard to whiskey, sugar, and wine, and a few other articles, and to some high classes of cottons—all of which may be treated as luxuries and proper subjects of a revenue tariff—there have been very few increases in rates. There have been a great number of real decreases in rates, and they constitute a sufficient amount to justify the statement that the bill is a substantial downward revision and a reduction of excessive rates. This is not a free-trade bill. It was not intended to be. The Republican party did not promise to make a free-trade bill. It promised to make the rates protective, but to reduce them when they exceeded the difference between the cost of production abroad and here, making allowance for the greater normal profit on active investments than that which this excess has not been reduced in a number of cases, but in a great majority the rates are such as are necessary to protect American industries, but are low enough, in case of abnormal increase of demand and rising prices, to permit the possibility of the importation of the foreign article and thus to prevent excessive prices.

The power granted to the Executive under the maximum and minimum clause may be exercised to secure the removal of obstacles which have been interposed by foreign governments in the way of imports and unfair discrimination against American merchandise and products.

The Philippine tariff act I have struggled to secure for two years last past, and it gratifies me exceedingly by my signature to give it the effect of law. I am sure it will greatly increase the trade between the two countries, and it will do much to build up the Philippines in a healthy prosperity.

The administrative changes that will result from the Customs Court are admirably adapted to secure

WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS DONE.

One great virtue in the new tariff law, including the corporation tax, is that taken with the current effort of the administration, to keep down or reduce governmental expenditures and to reform the methods of collecting the customs revenue, it has, by its revenue-producing capacity, turned a deficit in the ordinary operations of the government of \$58,000,000 for the year ending June 30, 1910, to a surplus in the first full year of the law, ending August 5, 1910, of \$26,000,000. From a revenue standpoint then, there can be no controversy over the effectiveness of the new law.

The charge that the present tariff is responsible for the increase in the prices of necessities is demonstrably false, because the high prices, with very few exceptions, affect articles in the tariff upon which there was no increase in rates or in respect to which there was a substantial reduction.

The Republican platform promised that it would admit to Statehood the Territories of New Mexico and Arizona, and that promise has been redeemed with suitable provisions for securing good and sane constitutions of the States by requiring their adoption in advance of the election of State officers, and their submission to Congress for consideration, and possible rejection at one of its sessions.

All this long list of useful enactments was promised in the Republican platform and has been put through by Republican majorities.

Congress has also enacted into law, in accordance with the promise which I made as a candidate for the Presidency, a bill requiring the publication by the Congressional committee of detailed statements of the money received by them and the money expended by them in the political canvass of each Congressional candidate.

PLACE HOME PRODUCTION.

place home production, they must be of benefit to all. Generally speaking, a full measure of industrial activity in production, transportation, and distribution has accompanied the operation of the new law. Under the maximum and minimum provisions we have concluded treaties with all foreign nations, gaining the best possible terms for entrance to their markets without sacrificing our own. By the Payne tariff law we have at last done justice to the Philippines by allowing the producers of those islands the benefit of our markets with such limitations as to prevent injury to our home industries.

Again, the present law in its corporation tax imposes a new kind of tax which has many of the merits of an income tax. It is a success, not failure. Unlike a personal income tax, it is easily and exactly collected, and by an increase or decrease in the rate enables Congress with exactness to regulate its income to its necessary expenditures. More than this, it furnishes an indirect but effective method of keeping government out of business, as to the kind of business done by all corporations. It is one of the most useful and important changes in our revenue laws, as the future will show. In spite of the criticisms heaped upon it at its passage, no party responsible for revenues or anxious to retain every means of legitimate supervision of corporations will repeat it.

INTERSTATE COMMERCE.

The next most important work of the present Congress was the passage of the amendment to the interstate commerce bill. The Republican platform favored amendment to the interstate commerce act with a view to giving greater power to the Interstate Commerce Commission in regulating the operation of railroads and the fixing of traffic rates, and also favored such national legislation and supervision as would prevent the future overissue of stocks and bonds by interstate carriers. After the adjournment of the Congress at its extra session, I invited two of my Cabinet and a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission and a member of Congress to make recommendations as to the needed amendments to the interstate commerce act. These gentlemen reported to me, and in September last, in a speech in Des Moines, I foreshadowed their recommendations as I intended to make them to the Congress for the amendment of the interstate commerce act:

First, by the establishment of a commerce court; second, by empowering the commission to classify merchandise as well as to fix rates for classes; third, by giving the right to interstate carriers to designate the route by which their goods shall be transported beyond the line of the initial carrier; fourth, by empowering the commission to consider the justice or injustice of any rate without the complaint or initiation of a shipper; fifth, by empowering the commission to suspend proposed increases of rates by carriers until the commission shall have a chance to pass upon the reasonableness of the increase; sixth, by provisions for the Federal regulation of the issue of stocks and bonds by interstate railways; seventh, by a clause forbidding an interstate commerce railway company from acquiring stock in a competing road; eighth, by a section permitting the making of traffic agreements between competing railroads limited in point of time and subject matter, and subject to the approval of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

These amendments were in accordance with the text of the Republican platform. Subsequently, bills were drawn embodying this recommended legislation. In addition, while the principle was maintained, there were limitations introduced, as justice suggested, after a conference with all the parties interested. The bill was submitted to Congress, and after a great deal of discussion, both in the House and the Senate, it was enacted into law, with many amendments which did not materially change the effect of the recommendations except to strike out certain provisions permitted in the Republican platform, to permit traffic agreements between railways in spite of anti-trust law, to forbid one railway company to acquire stock in a competing company, and to secure supervision by the Interstate Commerce Commission of the issue of stocks and bonds by interstate railways.

For this last was substituted a provision authorizing the appointment of a commission to consider in the future from the over-issue of stocks and bonds, and the methods of preventing such evils by Congressional regulation. In addition to the purposes already recited accomplished by the bill, the so-called long and short haul clause of the existing law—the one forbidding the charging of a greater rate for a less distance than for the greater distance—was amended so as to vest in the commission the power to vest in the commission in enforcing the clause than has been permitted by the Supreme Court decisions under existing law. Moreover, interstate telegraphs and telephones as instruments of commerce have been brought within the regulation of the commission.

The bill as at present in force is an excellent bill. It is not enacted in a spirit of hostility to railroads, but it subjects them to a closer and more effective supervision by the Interstate Commerce Commission to avoid injustice in their management and control.

The important part that railways play as the arterial circulation in the business of the country, the million and a half of their employees and the million of their stockholders, the importance of their purchasing power as affecting the prosperity

of general business—all require in the public interest that no unfair treatment should be accorded them. But I am glad to note that the railway managers have acquiesced in the fairness of the present bill, and propose loyally to comply with its useful provisions. It was supported by the whole Republican party in Congress, and that party is entitled to credit for its passage. The whole Democratic strength was exhibited against it in both Houses. It was a performance of a pledge of the platform, and only needs time to vindicate the wisdom of its enactment.

POSTAL SAVINGS BANKS.

The postal savings bank bill has a similar history. It is one of the great Congressional enactments. It creates an epoch. It institutes a system which will work effectively to promote thrift among the poor, by providing a depository for their savings which they properly may consider absolutely safe, and will also turn into the channels of trade and commerce a large volume of money which otherwise would be hoarded. By specific provision, it will stimulate the investment of savings in government bonds of small denominations, for which the bill provides. Like the tariff bill and the railroad bill, this was put through each House of Congress by a Republican majority, and was signed by a Republican President.

The legislation of Congress in respect to the Navy Department is a full compliance with the promises of the Republican platform. In spite of a proper desire to keep down appropriations, Congress saw the necessity for a continuation of our present naval policy and a regular strengthening of the navy by the addition of two more battle ships. More than this, it has enabled the Secretary of the Navy to carry out a reform in the business management of the department and a reorganization of the bureau and staff of the navy so as to contribute materially to its effectiveness as one of the military arms of the government. Although the Democratic national platform apparently favored the increase in the navy, a large majority of the Democrats, both in the House and the Senate, opposed the policy when presented in the form of concrete legislation.

LABOR LEGISLATION.

The Republican party at the last session of Congress again exhibited its deep and sincere interest in the general welfare of the working men and women of the country by adding important enactments to its already long record of legislation on this subject. Practically all classes of employees, especially those engaged in occupations more or less hazardous, are the beneficiaries of laws which should operate to lighten the burdens which naturally fall upon the shoulders of man. The Republican party recognized the necessity of reducing the dangers under which hundreds of thousands of miners work by creating the Bureau of Mines.

This bill was passed for the purpose of establishing an efficient governmental instrument for investigation, examination, and report to the world of the kind of safety appliances that will prevent the awful losses of life in the operation of mines, especially of coal mines. A second purpose of the bureau is to perform the same office with respect to the great industry of mining that the Department of Agriculture performs in respect to the farming interests of the country; that is, by experiment and investigation to determine the most effective methods of mining and the best means of avoiding the deplorable waste that now obtains in the present methods. No more important legislation in the interest of human life has ever been enacted by Congress than the laws of the Commerce Commission ample powers for the prevention of accidents to employees and passengers, and after hearing, to require their adoption by interstate railways. Other legislation, with respect to the inspection of locomotive boilers and the removal of dangerous overhead obstructions, awaits the consideration of the next session of Congress, and I hope that it may be speedily passed. The employees' liability act was perfected by needed amendments so far as to enable injured employees more easily to recover just damages.

But in no sense the most forward step taken in the interest of the worker was the creation of a Congressional commission to report a practical bill for the fixing of workmen's compensation for injuries received in the employment of interstate commerce railways, as risks in the business to be fixed by speedy arbitration and to be graduated according to the extent of the injury and the earning capacity of the injured person. This is important, not only as affecting interstate commerce railways, but if adopted, as furnishing a model to the country for a beneficial change in the legal relation between employer and employee. This reform would put an end to the vexatious and costly litigation through which an injured employee must go in order to recover damages—litigation which on account of the poverty of the employee frequently serves to defeat the ends of justice, and in other instances leads to exorbitant and unjust verdicts.

CONSERVATION.

One of the great questions which has been made a national issue and aroused public interest through the insistence of President Roosevelt is that of conservation of our national resources. From the Federal standpoint, this concerns the

preservation of forests, the reclamation of arid lands of the government, and the proper treatment and disposition of our government coal lands, phosphate lands, oil and gas lands, and of the lands known as water-power sites at the points on the streams where the water power must be converted in order to be useful. During Mr. Roosevelt's administration millions of acres of lands included within the classes described were withdrawn in the United States proper and in Alaska, in order to await proper legislation. Doubt arose as to the Executive power to make these withdrawals, and therefore as to their legality, should they be contested in court. The present administration continued the Executive withdrawals, but suggested, as a matter of wise precaution, securing from Congress express power to make them. By Republican majorities in both Houses a withdrawal bill for this purpose was enacted, and now over 70,000,000 of acres have been withdrawn of lands included within the classes described. Much of the land reserved as coal land is valuable for agriculture, and therefore Congress adopted an entirely feasible and useful plan by which the homestead laws were applied to the surface of the land, while the coal in the ground is reserved as a property of the government. This is a new departure in our land laws, and is highly to be commended. In addition to this, it was deemed necessary, in order that certain reclamation projects of the government should be completed within a reasonable time, that an issue of \$20,000,000 bonds should be authorized with which to secure water for the settlers upon government lands within the promise of the project, the bonds to be redeemed by the water rents for the service rendered.

In this way hundreds of settlers who have been patiently waiting for the completion of the projects and suffering great privation will be rehabilitated. At the same time, the law authorizing the bond issue prevents the expenditure of any of the proceeds of the bonds in any of the projects until a board of army engineers shall report the same as worthy and feasible. Moreover, additional provision has been made in the appropriation laws for money with which to carry out surveys of unsurveyed public land, a crying need in certain States and in Alaska. Thus it is not too much to say that most important steps have been taken toward the proper conservation of our resources in the legislation of the present Congress. There remains to be considered and settled the question of the method of disposing of these lands so that the government may retain sufficient control to prevent a monopoly in their use, and to secure the public against extortion for coal, oil, gas, phosphate, or water power on the one hand, and yet may give to private capital sufficient inducement to bring about a normal development of the wealth contained in these lands to aid in the building up of the country. Neither the Democrats of the House nor the Democrats of the Senate, as a body, although their platform formally declared in favor of conservation, have taken any active part or can be counted upon to secure, not merely in the present Congress, but in the future, the solution of these complicated questions.

Another subject of pressing importance is that of the improvement of our waterways. The present Congress has enacted more than \$40,000,000 for the carrying out of a number of well-defined plans for the permanent improvements of rivers and harbors within a certain period, and in addition authorizing contracts to be entered into subject to future appropriations by Congress, aggregating over \$10,000,000. The bill was subject to criticism in that it still continued the old piecemeal system and appropriated something for nearly every project recommended by the army engineers. It is hoped and believed that in the next session and thereafter the engineers will so make their recommendations as to indicate the projects of greater importance, so that adequate sums may be appropriated for their completion within a reasonably short time and the piecemeal policy of extending the construction of improvements of this kind indefinitely for years may be abandoned.

OTHER PLEDGES REDEEMED.

The Republican platform promised that it would admit to Statehood the territories of New Mexico and Arizona, and that promise has been redeemed with suitable provisions for securing good and sane constitutions of the States by requiring their adoption in advance of the election of State officers, and their submission to Congress for consideration, and possible rejection at one of its sessions. All this list of useful enactments was promised in the Republican platform and has been put through by Republican majorities. Congress has also enacted into law, in accordance with the promise which I made as a candidate for the Presidency, a bill requiring the publication by the Congressional committee of detailed statements of the money received by them and the money expended by them in the political canvass of each Congressional candidate.

In addition, the present Congress has appropriated \$100,000 to enable the Executive to investigate and make recommendations to the Senate by which the cost of running the government may be reduced. I regard this last as one of the most important parts of the administration's policy. I am confident that if full opportunity is given, and a Republican Congress is elected to assist, the cutting down of the national expenditures by the adoption of modern economic methods in doing the business of the government will reach to a point of saving many millions. How much the expenses can be curtailed it is impossible to approximate at this time. The problem before the administration is to get full value for every dollar it disburses.

The appropriations for the last year were more than \$20,000,000 less than the appropriations of the year before, and in the actual execution of the law \$11,000,000 were saved in the operation of the Post-office Department, for which appropriation had already been made.

FUTURE LEGISLATION.
A number of other promises remain to be kept. I have already alluded to the provisions to regulate the issue of stocks and bonds by interstate commerce railways, to which the Democratic minority in the Senate gave its solid opposition on the ground that the central government has no constitutional power to make and enforce such regulation. In addition, there is the promised procedure to determine how preliminary injunction shall issue without notice, and when. In substitution for this the Democratic platform proposed an amendment to the existing law which would create a privileged class of lawless workmen and would seriously impair the power of the courts of equity to do justice. There is the measure to promote the merchant marine engaged in foreign service, to

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which in previous Congresses the Democratic party has always opposed an almost solid front. There is the measure forbidding the acquisition of stocks by companies, and the view of the standard line, and there are also those bills, already referred to, to secure further safety appliances on railways and to establish a basis for workmen's compensation. There is also the promise of the Republican platform to make better provision for securing the health of the nation. The most tangible and useful form that this can take would be the establishment of a national bureau of health, to include all the health agencies of the government now distributed in different departments.

Finally there is the Appalachian forest reserve bill which passed the House by a Republican majority, is on the calendar of the Senate, and will probably pass at the coming session of this Congress. In view of what the present Republican Congress has done in the fulfillment of its promises, and the view of the standard that it has set in respect to the sacredness of party pledges, I have no hesitation in urging all who are in favor of progress, in favor of practical conservation, in favor of economy in government, in favor of the just regulation of railways, and of interstate commerce corporations, in favor of a bureau of health, in favor of a proper limitation of the power of equitable injunction, and who are in favor of measures to promote the merchant marine engaged in foreign service, to vote for the Republican candidates for Congress in order that their wish for all this progressive legislation may be gratified.

CONCLUSION.

In closing, it may not be inappropriate for me to invite your attention, and that of those engaged in advocating the Republican cause in the coming election, to the fact that it is of the utmost importance to make this a campaign of education as to facts and to clear away the clouds of misrepresentation that have obscured the real issues and have made it difficult to secure for the Republican majorities in Congress the real credit due them from the country for the tremendous task they have accomplished. If this is brought clearly home to all voters, and especially to the young men now voting for the first time, and they become impressed, as they ought to be by this record, with the difference in the governmental efficiency and capacity of the Republican and Democratic parties, they will enroll themselves with the party of construction and progress rather than with the party of obstruction and negation, and the resulting legislation of the Sixty-second Congress will vindicate their choice. Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM H. TAFT,
Hon. William B. McKinley, Chairman Republican Congressional Committee, 1133 Broadway, New York City.

Probably.
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Mulberry—Oh, their Congressmen probably fringed them.

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